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The other case is the reverse of this, and the lapse of time is not real. In 1646 the Hurons reported that a woman died and went to the white man's heaven, which was full of tormenting flames for all Indians who had been lured there, the French treating them as prisoners of war. After suffering there an entire day, which seemed to her longer than our years, at night she was awakened by one who pitied her and broke her bonds. Before returning to the earth she was shown the happy abode of those Hurons who clung to the religion of their fathers.

W. M. Beauchamp.

THE FEAST OF LANTERNS AND THE FEAST OF THE STAR WEAVER IN JAPAN. — The last number of the *Journal of American Folk-Lore* (vol. x. pp. 106-7) contains an article on certain customs in connection with All Souls' Day in Mexico, which has suggested to me certain comparisons with the observance in Japan of a feast which might also be termed All Souls' Day, as it is the time when the spirits of the dead return to their families on earth. It is called, however, the Bommatsuri or Feast of Lanterns, and occurs on the 13th, 14th, and 15th days of the 7th month, old calendar. Though I have lived in Japan several years, this summer for the first time I came into contact with the keeping of the feast, and made some inquiries into it. It is universally observed with some variations of custom in different provinces, but is alike in the main points. I will attempt to give only an outline of the way it is observed in this part of the Kishin province, prefaced by a few explanations concerning the Hotoke, or spirits of the dead.

When any one dies, a new or posthumous name is chosen, which the priest of the family temple writes upon a thin strip of white pine, which is placed in the house of the deceased on the ancestral shelf. The first tombstone is but a pine post, and when this is changed for the permanent stone, the pine strip is changed for a small wooden tablet, lacquered black, and the name is written in gold letters. For a man and wife there is but one tablet, the name of the surviving one being written in red until his or her death, when it is erased and the posthumous name written in gold. If the family is ancient and the tablets of deceased ancestors become very numerous, a larger tablet is made, in which all the names are written. These tablets and the tombstones are also both called Hotoke. The ancestral worship is observed before the tablets at home and at the family temple at certain anniversaries of the deaths and at the Bommatsuri.

When the time for the feast draws near, the tablets and shelf are washed clean, a banana or plantain leaf is spread upon the shelf, and branches of leaves, especially the white bush clover, decorate the ends. If there has been a recent death, the family secure by buying or borrowing as many and as beautiful lanterns as they can, and hang them in the room of the ancestral shelf and in the garden. In one house we saw thirty or forty, some very ornamental. In one town of the province these lanterns are of special shapes made only for the occasion. Here they are ordinary shapes and kinds as a rule. In some places one lantern hangs in every house, in others none are used except where there is the display for the late death.

On the evening of the 13th small fires are built in the streets before each house, to light the spirits on their way, and to welcome them. Where there has been a recent death, there may be a number of these fires; but usually the light takes the form of a row of tapers stuck on reeds, which are thrust into the ground.

During the three days special food is prepared, no flesh being used, as spirits do not eat flesh. The food placed before the tablets for the spirits is afterward given to beggars, and a portion is sometimes sent to the temple, where it falls to the priests to eat. Special prayers for the dead are offered at the temple, also the priests go from house to house, stopping to offer prayers where it is asked, and in return receiving offerings for the temple. There is special merit in offerings made at this time, or in prayers or pilgrimages. There is a saying here, that a pilgrimage made to the shrine of Kōbo (the famous priest Kōbo Daishi, I suppose) before one sleeps after bidding farewell to the departing spirits on the night of the 15th, is worth 8,000 visits at other times. There is much chanting of prayers and beating of gongs, but there is also a holiday feeling and much burning of fireworks.

On the night of the 15th the fires again burn to light the spirits on their return journey, and in the middle of the night the surviving relatives speed the departing dead on their way, in some places by burning the decorating branches and the lanterns, in this province by floating them away on the river or sea. Borrowed lanterns are of course returned.

Another feast concerning which I have never seen anything in print, and of which I happened to hear for the first time this summer, is the Feast of the Weaver or star Vega, celebrated on the 7th day of the 7th month. The Japanese call the star Tanabata San or Orihime or Shokujo, all meaning Weaving Princess. On this night, two celestial beings are said to come from this star over the Milky Way to visit man. The observance seems to have for its purpose the inculcating of the spirit of Industry in the children, and may be said to be a joint festival for the boys and girls, who have their separate feasts earlier in the year, the girls having the Feast of Dolls on the 3d day of the 3d month, the boys having the Feast of Flags on the 5th day of the 5th month.

In preparing for this festival, a bamboo plant is brought into the house, and a picture of the two celestials is hung upon it, the Prince represented as a farmer leading a cow, the Princess as a housewife with a loom. As farming and weaving were among man's first industries, this feast would seem to have an ancient origin. The boys and girls also write copies of famous poems, and hang them on the bamboo. They must rise early in the morning before Tanabata San comes, and go out and gather the dew from the taro, a plant whose large leaves collect great globules of dew. Then they must wash their ink-stone very clean, and, rubbing the cake of ink in the dew, make the writing fluid with which they copy the poems. If they do this, they will become skilful penmen.

Summer fruits are brought in to represent the results of man's industry, and with two halves of a fruit of the egg-plant, some white, round chop-

sticks, and colored silk threads, a toy loom is made to show what is the woman's part of the home work. Leaves of the mulberry tree are also brought in, five of the round leaves to represent man, five of the triangular to represent woman.

The heavenly visitors remain one night, and the next night the children take the tree and its ornaments, with the fruits and toys, and float them away on the water after the returning spirits.

Agnes Morgan.

ŌSAKA, JAPAN.

LOCAL MEETINGS AND OTHER NOTICES.

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE AMERICAN FOLK-LORE SOCIETY. — As already announced, the Annual Meeting for the present year will be held at Baltimore, Md., December 28.

FOLK-LORE AT THE MEETING OF THE A. A. A. S., DETROIT, AUGUST 10. — In arranging the preliminary programme for the Detroit meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, it was planned to assign the first day of the meeting of the section of anthropology to folk-lore, and some provision was made for the formal participation of the American Folk-Lore Society during this day. Unfortunately circumstances prevented the attendance of leading officers of this Society; but nevertheless the afternoon session of the section on August 10 was devoted to folk-lore.

The first paper was a highly suggestive and significant communication from Madame Zelia Nuttall, on "The Superstitions, Beliefs, and Practices of the Ancient Mexicans," which will be published in full in this Journal. The paper received favorable comment from various students, notably Dr. Hrdlicka, who called attention to the many similarities between the customs of ancient Mexico, as described by the early chroniclers, and customs still prevailing among the lower classes of other parts of the world, notably central Europe.

The second paper, entitled "The Study of Ceremony," was presented in person by the highly esteemed ex-President of the American Folk-Lore Society, Dr. Washington Matthews. This communication also will be printed in full in this Journal. The essay received notable attention, and was freely discussed; afterward the section took action on Dr. Matthews's suggestion that a committee be appointed to consider the expediency of applying a specific name to the study of ceremony, and also to select a suitable term; and Reverend Stephen D. Peet, Miss Alice Fletcher, and Mr. Frank Hamilton Cushing were appointed to coöperate with Dr. Matthews as such committee.

The next communication was entitled "Koreshanity: A Latter-Day Cult," by Anita Newcomb McGee, M. D. This cult or religious system was originated about a dozen years ago by Dr. Cyrus R. Teed, whose followers call him Koresh, from the Hebrew form of his pre-name. It